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ABSTRACT

To assist the transition from novice teacher to skilled, experienced teacher, mentorship programs are being developed and refined. One such program has been developed and is currently being implemented and evaluated through the collaborative efforts of teacher educators from the University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minnesota, and staff from a suburban district in Bloomington, Minnesota. The program, one of 11 sites funded in 1988 by the Minnesota State Department of Education, provides for specific training, support, and frequent formal and informal contacts that stimulate professional growth and have positive effects on the learning environment. In January 1989, 26 mentors and 29 mentees were surveyed regarding the program's effects on the learning environment. All respondents agreed that the program has positively affected the learning environment. Both mentors and mentees indicated an increase in the use of new teaching technologies, increased positive self-image, greater awareness of students' learning, development of motivational techniques, and more effective use of classroom management techniques. Other improvements included increased use of enrichment activities, enhanced professionalism, improved classroom communication, and overall use of better instructional practices. (17 references) (MLH)

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THE EFFECTS OF A MENTOR-MENTEE PROGRAM ON THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

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THE EFFECTS OF A MENTOR-MENTEE PROGRAM ON THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

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ABSTRACT

A Mentor-Mentee program has been developed and is currently being implemented and evaluated through the collaborative efforts of teacher educators from the University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, MN, and staff from the suburban school district of Bloomington, MN. This program provides for specific training, support, and frequent formal and informal contacts which stimulate professional growth and have positive effects on the learning environment. The program in Bloomington is one of eleven sites funded in 1988 by the Minnesota State Department of Education, and currently serves as a demonstration site. Twenty six mentors and twenty nine mentees were surveyed and all stated that the program has significantly positive effects on the learning environment.

Doug Warring is an Assistant Professor and formerly the Program Director for Graduate Teacher Education and Curriculum and Instruction at the University of St. Thomas. He also is past Chair of the Bloomington Planning, Evaluation, and Reporting Committee, has worked with the Mentorship program since it began, and has served on their Staff Development Advisory Committee, as well as other school district committees.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Overview

In recent years, based on national reports of the effectiveness of education and the state of the teaching profession, interest has grown in providing formal assistance to persons entering the teaching profession. The transition from student or novice teacher to skilled, experienced teacher is difficult and usually unguided. Beginning teachers have:

(1) been expected to assume the full complement of teaching from the first day;
(2) not always been given organized assistance from their experienced colleagues;
(3) often been isolated from colleagues;
(4) not shared in collaborative teaching strategies; and
(5) often been given the most difficult assignments.

Induction to any profession has always been a time of great sensitivity. One of the recent developments to assist beginning teachers has been the mentorship approach. To improve the induction of beginning teachers, mentorship programs are being developed and refined. One of the dominant characteristics of most mentor programs is the appointment of an experienced teacher to assist the new teacher in understanding the culture of the school (Galves-Hjornevik, 1986). This support teacher is then designated as a mentor teacher and assumes a variety of responsibilities, (see Table 1).

Insert Table #1 approximately here.

Table 1
Categories of Support Appropriate for Beginning Teachers

Systems information	Giving information related to procedures, guidelines, and expectations of the school district
Mustering of resources	Collecting, disseminating, or locating materials or other resources
Instructional information	Giving information about teaching strategies or the instructional process
Emotional support	Offering support by listening emphatically and sharing experiences
Advice on student management	Giving guidance and ideas related to discipline and managing students
Advice on scheduling and planning	Offering information about organizing and planning the school day
Help with the classroom environment	Helping arrange, organize, or analyze the physical setting of the classroom
Demonstration teaching	Teaching while the new teacher observes (preceded by a conference to identify the focus of the observation and followed by a conference to analyze the observed teaching episode)
Coaching	Critiquing and providing feedback on the beginning teacher's performance
Advise on working with parents	Giving help or ideas related to conferencing or working with parents

Note: Derived from "Induction Support of New Teachers: A Functional Approach" by S.J. Odell, *Journal of Teacher Education*, 37(1), 27.

B. Conceptual Background

Clemson (1987) suggests that mentorship is a time-tested strategy for developing competence in the professions, and happens whenever a relationship of mutual trust, support, and benefit exists between a protege and mentor. The primary objective of teacher induction programs should be to meet the needs of new teachers. These new teachers, known as mentees, need to be assigned a mentor who is a veteran classroom teachers with seven or more years of teaching experience. This experience allows the mentors to provide assistance to their mentees in a variety of ways (Odell, Loughlin, & Ferraro, 1986-87).

In developing teacher mentor programs, it is all too easy to focus prematurely on such tasks as designing job descriptions for mentors and other legalistic issues. It is necessary to carefully think about mentoring as a concept and fully explore the mentor-mentee relationships. Developers of programs must decide what these essential components are and develop dispositions that mentors are to exhibit as they carry out the functions and activities.

College/university and local school collaboration is essential in all phases of pre-service and in-service teacher education. The University of St. Thomas and the Bloomington Public Schools have been working in both of these areas from planning to grant application, through in-servicing and evaluation. Shared decision-making and participatory management are cornerstones of these collaborative efforts. One of the key components of the mentorship program is the focus on improvement of instruction which will positively impact the learning environment.

The term mentor historically denotes a trusted guide and counselor, and the mentor-mentee relationship, a deep and meaningful association (Galvez-Hjornevik, 1986). It has since been expanded to mean teacher, coach, trainer, developer of talent, positive role model, sponsor, and leader. The mentor is to be supportive of and is to help the mentee with the so called nuts and bolts (Thies-Sprinthall, 1986).

School systems cannot expect that experienced teachers will be able to provide effective assistance to beginners in a systematic way without appropriate training and assistance. According to Thies-Sprinthall (1986), a careful task analysis of the supervision role indicates that it is much more complex than effective teaching, and competent performers cannot automatically analyze their own performance.

Mentors are teachers first and have been much more than master teachers (Gehrke, 1988). Three stages have been identified in the development of these

mutual, comprehensive relationships. Phase one is characterized by idealism and dependency. Phase two is characterized by increasing independence and negotiation of the details of the interaction, while the last phase includes recognition of the fallibility and humanness of the mentor, and a shift in the relationship from a hierarchical one to one of independent equals, (see Table 2).

Insert Table # 2 approximately here.

TABLE 2

TEACHER'S PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR PROFESSIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Professional Characteristics	STAGE 1 Survival State First Year	STAGE 2 Adjustment Stage Second, Third, and Year	STATE 3 Mature Stage Fifth Year and Beyond
Knowledge of Teaching Activities	Limited knowledge of teaching methods, lesson planning, record keeping, motivating and disciplining students, and organizational skills	Increasing knowledge and skills in these areas activities	Good command of these teaching
Knowledge of Teaching Environment	Limited knowledge of children's characteristics (e.g., personalities, behaviors, attention spans, achievement levels), school curriculum, school rules and regulations	Increasing knowledge and skills in these areas	Good command of the teaching environment
Professional Insight	Limited insight into the children or school environment, unable to see themselves objectively; wrapped up in their own activities	Gradually gained insight into the complexities of the professional environment; saw children in more complex ways and were able to respond to their needs more capably	
Approach to Curriculum	Subject-centered curricular approach; limited personal contact with the children	Transitional period with more concern for the child's self-concept	Child-centered curricular approach; more concerned with teaching the individual child and creating a positive classroom environment

TABLE 2 (continued)

TEACHER'S PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR PROFESSIONAL CHARACTERISTICS (continued)

Professional Characteristics	STAGE 1 Survival State First Year Year	STAGE 2 Adjustment Stage Second, Third, and Beyond	STATE 3 Mature Stage Fifth Year and
Changing Images of Teaching	Adopted an image of what a teacher should be and conformed to that image; taught traditionally	Gradually stopped conforming to the image and started using techniques that worked best for them; let their own personalities come out more	
Professional Confidence,Security, and Maturity	Feelings of inadequacy; uncertain and confused about many aspects of the job; worried about how to teach and about not teaching correctly	More comfortable with subject matter and techniques; more relaxed and sure of themselves	Feelings of being a mature teacher; confident and secure
Willingness to Try New Teaching Methods	Unwilling to try new methods while trying to master initial skills	Willing to continually experiment with different techniques after mastering some initial skills; saw the need to use more methods to meet children's needs	Willing to continually experiment with new techniques to increase their competence, to passively accept change, or to keep teaching environment

Source: Burden, P.R. (1980) Teachers' perceptions of the characteristics and influences of their personal and professional development. Dissertation Abstracts International, 40, 5404A.

In order to encourage and enhance the relationships and facilitate positive change in the learning environment, some conditions must be met. Individuals must have some choice and extra time to spend together (Gehrke, 1986).

D. Practical Issues in Mentoring

The State of Minnesota appropriated funds for exemplary mentor/mentee programs, and the Bloomington Public Schools with assistance from the University of St. Thomas applied for and received a $50,000 grant for the 1988-89 school year and $10,000 each year for 1989-90 and 1990-91 as a demonstration site. It should be noted that Bloomington was one of eleven sites funded, and the school district has continued funding for 1989-90, & 90-91. The goal of the Bloomington proposal is to establish a team-centered mentorship program, and provide professional growth for probationary and career teachers with an emphasis on improvements in the learning environment. Bloomington now serves as a demonstration site, and sixteen new sites received $5,000 planning grants.

The following job description was developed to facilitate the selection of mentors based on desired responsibilities, (see Role of Mentors).

1. Role of Mentors

Bloomington building mentors will incorporate a variety of strategies and activities to help mentee(s) grow and develop professional competence, attitudes, and behaviors.

The mentor's role will include, but not be limited to:

I. Act as Advocate
   - A. Support and counsel mentee(s), provide perspective when needed
   - B. Work to establish a relationship with mentee(s) based on mutual trust, respect, support, and collegiality.
   - C. Provide encouragement, moral support, guidance, feedback, and mediation for mentees.

II. Participate in Mentor Orientation and Training
   - A. Agree to participate in orientation to the mentorship program and in training as mentors
   - B. Develop and enhance teaching and mentoring skills.

III. Provide Information

A. Regular contact with mentee(s) to deal with concerns (i.e., supplies and materials, planning, daily problems).

B. Facilitate the professional development of the mentee(s) of appropriate in-service and staff development opportunities.

C. Help mentee(s) understand building and district policies, regulations, procedures, and schedules.

IV. Serve as Demonstration/Resource Teacher

A. Mentors will provide opportunities for mentee(s) to observe the mentor and other teachers teaching.

B. Bring new and alternative materials, methods, and resources to the attention of mentee(s)

C. Acquaint mentee(s) with available district resources and programs.

D. Communicate positive support for programs and policies of the Bloomington Schools and model professionalism.

V. Serve as Coach

A. Observe classroom performance and provide feedback.

B. Model by example.

C. Assist mentee(s) to identify special needs of students, parents and/or self

VI. Provide Information to the Mentorship Governing Board

A. Participate in the evaluation of the mentor program

B. Provide input for future mentor program planning

C. Maintain a record of mentoring contacts and activities

To facilitate these and other necessary conditions, Marilyn Lindquist, Clinical Supervision Program Leader and Mentor Site Director, directs the program, recruits, trains, and consults with the mentor teacher, assigns new teachers to mentors, plans and conducts in-service programs, plans new programs, distributes materials, prepares reports, and reports to the school board. Doug Warring has served as a consultant to the program from the grant writing process, to training of the mentors, and evaluation of the program. These are consistent with the criteria for other successful mentorship programs, Locke, 1988). See Table 3.

Insert Table #3 approximately here.

TABLE 3

MOST FREQUENTLY PERCEIVED PROBLEMS OF BEGINNING TEACHERS

Rank Order	Problems	Frequency (N=91 Studies)
1	Classroom Discipline	77
2	Motivating Students	48
3	Dealing with Individual Differences	43
4	Assessing Students' Work	31
5	Relations with parents	27
5	Organization of Class work	27
7	Dealing with Problems of Individual Students	26

Veeman, S. (1984). Perceived problems of beginning teachers Review of Education Research,54,143-178.

The intent of the Bloomington Mentor-Mentee Program is to create the climate for this type of a relationship to develop. When these types of relationships develop there is a significant impact on the learning environment.

2. Bloomington Mentor-Mentee Program

As new teachers assume their role of teacher, as teachers change teaching assignments or school districts, there is a definite need for a mentor to assist these professionals. Recognizing this need, a cadre of Bloomington staff along with staff form the College of St. Thomas in St. Paul, a grant was written requesting funds appropriated by the Minnesota Legislature for this purpose. The Bloomington Schools received funding and was designated as one of eleven Minnesota Mentor Demonstration Sites. The Bloomington program was governed by an eleven member Mentor Governing Board and administered by a Mentor Site Director. The Mentor Governing Board was comprised of eight teachers, one building principal and the Director of Personnel, and involved sixteen mentors and forty-three mentees in 1989-90. Presently the Mentor Governing Board consists of nine members, six of whom are teachers, one building principal, and the Director of Personnel, and the Mentor Site Director. Currently the program involves twenty-five mentors and fifty-one mentees.

The Bloomington Mentor Governing Board is comprised of the following nine representatives: one elementary and one secondary teachers elected by their peers, one junior high teacher representing the Staff Development Advisory committee, two mentors, the President of the Bloomington Federation of Teachers, a principal, the Director of Personnel and a teacher on special assignment form the Curriculum and Instruction Department who serves as the Mentor Site Director.

The Mentor Governing Board meets on a monthly basis and additional meetings are scheduled as situations occur. The role of the Mentor Governing Board is to provide focus and direction for the program. It oversees the functioning of the program and provides input and reactions on a regular basis. In addition, the board serves as a sounding board to participants and colleagues.

The purpose of the mentorship program is to unite experienced and newly hired teachers in smoothing the transition from theory to practice. The program also assists experienced teachers who are new to the district to become familiar with the school district, its programs, students, staff and community. Likewise, teachers who change teaching assignments may also receive assistance to become familiar with

the new instructional program assignment. The intent of the program is to have a positive impact on the learning environment.

Program goals have been established to reflect the purpose of the program. Specific goals have also been identified for mentors, mentees and administrators.

One of the early tasks of the Mentor Governing Board was to write a job description for mentors. In the Bloomington Schools, a mentor is defined as:

> **A career teacher with a minimum of seven years teaching experience in the Bloomington School District who remains in his/her regular teaching assignment while working with a probationary teacher called a "mentee".**

Staff who are interested in participating in the mentor program must apply by completing a written application, obtaining two recommendations (one from a colleague and the other from an administrator), prepare a ten minute video tape of their classroom instruction and share the video tape at the interview session conducted by the Mentor Governing Board. Mentors are identified on a yearly basis.

A detailed mentor job description can be found in the Bloomington Mentor-Mentee Handbook.. Mentors are classroom teachers who receive a yearly stipend of one thousand dollars. Five major responsibilities include: being an advocate and role model, participating in mentor orientation and training, communicating to colleagues, serving as a demonstration/resource teacher and serving as a coach.

Mentees are probationary teachers as defined by the state of Minnesota. The Mentor Governing board strives to pair mentors and mentees according to building and teaching assignment whenever possible. The ultimate purpose of the Mentor-Mentee Program is to improve the quality of instruction for Bloomington students and to assist new teachers as they assume their teaching responsibilities, adjust to the students, staff, school, school district, parents and community.

As the program was developed, a writing team identified a monthly activity guide for mentors and mentees. These suggested activities provide participants with topics to discuss which assist mentees to learn about the district and to prepare for upcoming instructional responsibilities. Activities include such topics but are not limited to: preparing for initial parent contacts; discussing the involvement of paraprofessionals, aides and support staff; discussing mid-term progress report procedures and participating in a three-way conference of the mentor, mentee and administrator, and how to positively impact the learning environment.

Training is a key component of the Bloomington Mentor-Mentee Program. Program participants receive periodic training throughout the year. Training sessions are primarily conducted by district staff development trainers. However, consultants from the University of St. Thomas and other agencies are also utilized. Training components are congruent with the Bloomington Staff Development Plan. Sessions are conducted on contract time as well as for in-service credit after the contractual day. Training sessions for mentors include such topics as communication skills, observation and conferencing skills, dealing with conflict resolution and problem solving. Mentees receive training on a myriad of topics which include: the Elements of Instruction, preparing and conducting parent teacher conferences, classroom management, becoming familiar with and utilizing resources and learning about special services in the district and community. All of these elements directly impact the learning environment.

During the 1989-90 school term the Mentor-Mentee Forum was established. As a result of needs assessment surveys, topics were identified by program participants. A Mentor-Mentee Forum in-service course is provided during fall, winter and spring sessions. Mentors, mentees, Mentor Governing Board and administrators are invited to attend these sessions. Topics for this year have included classroom management, self-concept and multicultural-gender fair issues.

Assessment of participants' needs, as well as training sessions to address those needs, is on -going. Plans are modified to meet people's identified areas for growth as the school year progresses. At the conclusion of the 1988-89 & 89-90 school years, district and state level summative evaluations were administered to mentors, mentees, governing board members and administrators. The local district also conducted formative evaluations on a continuous basis. The program recommendations included positive mentor and mentee relationships; confidence in mentor's ability, performance, guidance and support; mentor's influence in the one-to-one mentoring; mentor and mentee assigned to the same building; release time for classroom observations of mentor, mentee and joint observations by mentor and mentee of colleagues; training of mentors in classroom observations, conferencing, communication skills, conflict management and problem solving; training for mentees in the Elements of Instruction and classroom management; mentees understanding of their roles of responsibilities as teachers; leadership and management of the program provided by the governing board and site director.

During the 1989-90 & 90-91 school terms the focus on the areas for growth identified in the 1988-89 & 89-90 surveys included: more training requested by

mentees in the area of reporting to and working with parents; more mentor input and influence on the mentee's role in the community; and mentor-mentee partnerships identified prior to the opening of the 1989-90 school year.

The Mentor-Mentee Program is an opportunity for professional growth and development of all participants—mentors, mentees, Mentor Governing Board members and administrators. This mentor program has provided evidence that participants are involved in sharing, caring and growing professionally.

This research study will examine the variables involved in creating more positive learning environments which should successfully enhance the academic achievement for students of mentees.

II. METHOD

A. Subjects

The subjects included in the initial study included sixty-seven (67) participants from the Bloomington schools and four hundred fifty-seven (457) participants from all of the eleven demonstration mentor sites in the State of Minnesota. The individuals were either mentors, mentees, building administrators, or site council members. In the Bloomington group, 38 were mentees, 16 were mentors, and 13 were building administrators. Of the 38 mentees, 11 or 29% were in their first year of teaching, 26 or 68% were in their second or third year of teaching, and 1 or 3% was a paid intern teacher, 32 or 84% were female, and 6 or 16% were male, and ages ranged from 23 to 52. Of the 16 mentors, 1 or 6% was a first year mentor, and 15 or 94% were second or third year mentors, 14 or 88% were female, and 2 or 12% were male, and ages ranges from 40 to 58. All of the mentors and mentees were distributed throughout elementary, middle school/junior high, and high school.

In the second survey, twenty-six (26) mentors and twenty-nine (29) mentees were identified in the local district. They were questioned regarding the impact of the program on the learning environment. Demographic break downs parallelled previous respondents.

B. Strategies

In January of 1989, at the mid-year of the Mentor-Mentee Program, and in May of 1989 & 1990, near the end of the school year, surveys were sent out to all mentors, mentees, and building administrators who were participating in the Mentor-Mentor

Program in the Bloomington Schools, (N=67). The survey consisted of 34 questions for mentors, 34 questions for the mentees, and 20 questions for the administrators. Additionally, a separate 110 item survey was administered to participants in all eleven demonstration sites, (N=457) in the State of Minnesota. Even though not all buildings had mentors or mentees, all administrators were invited to participate in the program. In the fall of 1990, twenty-six mentors and twenty-nine mentees were surveyed regarding the program's impact on the learning environment.

The questions focused on current research in mentoring, and examined some of the attitudes and values of the individuals involved in the program, and a "5-point, Likert type, scale" was used for the first sets of surveys. As an example, one of the questions asked the mentors, mentees, and administrators if they were aware of the program goals prior to becoming involved in the specifics of the program.

C. Measures

Surveys were administered to all of the mentors, mentees, and building administrators in the Bloomington project and to all of the participants in the other ten demonstration sites around the state of Minnesota. Items surveyed included personal assessment of: teaching strategies, teaching styles, lesson presentations, effective location and use of resources, classroom management and rules, effective grading/evaluation systems, observation, modelling, daily lessons, curriculum materials and resources, communication skills, problem solving, student motivation, individual needs of students, assessing student performance, program impact on the learning environment, and other procedural issues. A 5 point "Likert Type' scale was used in the first local Bloomington surveys and respondents were given a range of responses from Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, to No Opinion. In the larger state-wide assessment, the respondents were asked to circle responses from 1 to 6 for statements regarding needed and received assistance and in other parts of the survey were asked to check all statements that applied regarding training and support behaviors that were either helpful or would have been more helpful. The percentages were then compared for mentees, mentors, and building administrators. In the second local assessment the mentors and mentees were given open ended questions regarding the program and its effects on the learning environment.

III. Results

The mid-year survey was used to include new training sessions and the end-of-year surveys were used to plan for 1989-90 & 1990-91 respectively. In examining some of the specific responses for individual persons, question regarding clear goals for the Mentor-Mentee Program being established and clearly communicated, received a favorable response, including 100 percent of all the mentors and 76 percent of the mentees. This indicates that all of the mentors and mentees were aware early of these specific goals of the program, and this in turn would facilitate more positive kinds of understanding and interaction on the part of all involved. One of the areas noted in the current research suggests that if the mentors and mentees are not aware of the specific goals of the program, there is more room for more apprehension and misunderstandings (Smith, et al, 1986). A clear articulation of the goals is one of the strengths of the Bloomington Mentor-Mentee Program.

Another set of questions dealing specifically with the mentor/mentee activities, and looking at the amount of helpfulness and productivity as a result of them, indicated that 100 percent of the mentors found the activities to be helpful and productive, and 85 percent of the mentors reported that they had been in fact refining their teaching styles and strategies, which created positive changes in the learning environments, as a result of being involved in the Mentorship Program. This, coupled with some of the other research, very clearly established the fact that not only do the students and mentees reap rewards from being involved in the program, but also the mentors (Varah, Theune, & Parker, 1986, and Hawk, 1986-87). It gives them a chance to re-evaluate what they're doing and, in fact, provides some more specific in-servicing kinds of activities.

The mentees reported a 68 percent agreement with the question of helpfulness and productivity in terms of the mentorship activities, and 52 percent of the respondents reported that they themselves also developed new teaching strategies as a result of having worked with the mentors. Eight-five percent of the mentors and 68 percent of the mentees said that they had been examining and improving their teacher styles and strategies, and were much more aware of their own teaching behaviors as a result of having been involved in the mentor/mentee experience. If we contend that these kinds of activities, teaching styles, and strategies should have direct and positive effects on the students (Gillett & Halkett, 1988), we can examine a question that was asked of the administrators in which 78 percent of those responding said that the Mentor-Mentee Program was indeed beneficial to the students. Since this is

the primary concern of the instructional program, it adds strength to the argument to continue such Mentor-Mentee Programs. Additional support comes from the administrator responses indicating that over 84 percent believed that the program was beneficial for the mentees, and 100 percent of administrators indicated that the program was beneficial for the mentors. The program provides additional peer assistance that might not otherwise be available for all of the participants due to heavy loads carried by the building administrators. This further substantiates the fact that seasoned veteran teachers are in need of collaboration in in-service training.

An area that is often of concern to teachers is the isolation that can result from being involved in an individual's classroom (Weber, 1987) and not being able to gain social and emotional support from colleagues (Krupp, 1987). Questions in the survey addressed this topic. Sixty-five percent of the mentors responded that they had received additional social and emotional support form their colleagues in the building; seventy-five percent of the mentors indicated that they had received additional social and emotional support from building administrators; and 100 percent of the mentors responded that they had received adequate additional social and emotional support from other mentors in the program as a result of the mentor training. Correlated with this is the fact that 92 percent of the mentees responded that they had received additional social and emotional support during their experience. These responses substantiate the fact that the Mentor-Mentee Program does facilitate positive interaction and discussion of topics which may not otherwise occur (Weber, 1987).

During the past few years the school district has in-serviced staff on the Elements of Instruction and related concepts. The survey indicated that 100 percent of the mentors an 80 percent of the mentees believed that they had reviewed and incorporated the Elements of Instruction training, strategies, ideas, and concepts into their teaching.

Classroom management, which is often an area of concern, was addressed and 95 percent of the mentors response was that they had reviewed adequate training, and over help of all of the mentees who responded indicated that they had received adequate training in classroom management. This topic will continue to be reviewed at future in-services.

In looking at the selection process and the decisions made in selecting mentors, questions were asked of the mentees about their mentors. Ninety-six percent of the mentees responded that their mentors were effective role models, and had

demonstrated excellent leadership qualities to them. This indicates another strength of the program was the overall selection process and the matching or pairing of mentors with mentees, which has often been noted to be a problem in other Mentor-Mentee Programs (Thies-Sprinthall, 1986). It's also worthy of note here to specify that because the program is based in one large suburban school district, rather than a consortium of many smaller rural school districts, it is easier to match the individuals and assign the mentor and a mentee in the same building. The amount of satisfaction with the program is further substantiated by the fact that 95 percent of the mentors said they would recommend the program to others, and 85 percent of the mentors said they most definitely would participate again as a mentor, given the opportunity.

In the second local survey 100% (all 55) of the respondents indicated that the program has had a positive impact on the learning environment. Respondents indicated an increase in the use of new teaching methodologies, increased positive self image, greater awareness of students learning, development of motivational techniques, and more effective use of positive classroom management techniques. Other items noted include: increased use of enrichment activities, enhanced professionalism, improved classroom communication, and overall use of better instructional techniques.

One of the areas of concern that has arisen as a result of the survey is the amount of time given to observe other teachers. Although 48 percent of the mentees indicated that their mentor did demonstration teaching for them, which is an extremely important part of the Mentorship Program, 44 percent mentioned that they did not have adequate time to observe other teachers in other classrooms. The amount of release time for teachers in the district has been a major issue for quite some time. Some of the administrators contend that some of the teachers are spending more time than they would like to see happening outside of the classroom. As noted in the survey, 50 percent of the administrators indicated that they would not feel that more time out of the classroom would be beneficial for the mentors or mentees, and 50 percent indicated that they would not like to have more in-services taking place during school time. In discussing this issue with some of the other Mentor Programs in Minnesota, it appears that the ability to provide in-services for mentors and mentees during the regular school day is more beneficial that providing it in the evenings and/or weekends. One of the other programs in Minnesota, which is a consortium of eight rural school districts, has been providing in-servicing in the evenings and on weekends of their mentors and mentees. They

state that due to factors of time in traveling and other personal commitments, it has been difficult to assure that all of the mentors and mentees attend the "after-hours" training sessions.

In addition to the meetings, in-services, and formal contacts that have been established through the Mentor-Mentee Program, the mentors and mentees were both asked about the number of informal contacts they have with their partner each week. Thirty-five percent of the mentors and 35 percent of the mentees indicated that they had between five and ten informal contacts each week, while 25 percent of the mentors and mentees indicated that they had 15 or more informal contacts with their partner each week. This suggests that even though there is formal, structured training, in-service, and observation time, much more communication is taking place outside of those formally structured periods. It also seems to indicate a desire for more kinds of activities to be established on a more regular basis.

In summary, the evaluations indicated some very significant areas of strength and also some areas for growth. To quote an anonymous statement by one of the mentors: "Sharing with a colleague, seeing a new teacher grow and develop, becoming aware of improving my own teaching, and getting to know other mentors has been the most beneficial aspect of my teaching career." To quote an anonymous mentee: "In being a new person, it has provided a good contact person to help with meeting the staff, as a resource, and as a person to bounce ideas off. A Mentor Program gives you a feeling of belonging instead of having to sink or swim by yourself."

It should be remembered that effective mentoring is not the single answer to providing a positive environment for new teachers or creating a positive learning environment for students. Other factors to be concerned with are organizational atmospheres and working conditions. These include the support of veteran teachers of the system, the support of administrators in the system, and effective use of staff development resources. Based on this information, a handbook for all new teachers was developed.

V. Recommendations

Based upon the current research and the data collected in this study, the following recommendations are suggested to assist in the development of successful mentorship programs.

1. Establish and communicate clear goals and objectives.
2. Involve representatives from all buildings and groups in the election of mentors.
3. Identify and train mentors early.
4. Match mentors and mentees by:
   a. subject matter
   b. grade level
   c. building
   d. proximity within building
5. Conduct ongoing, regular in-service workshops during the school day (if possible, secure college credit).
6. Secure release time to facilitate a maximum number of observations.
7. Arrange to have the mentee observe other teachers.
8. Have mentors and mentees keep journals and submit weekly activity logs.
9. Sponsor or participate in conferences with other mentor programs.
10. Involve as many faculty members as possible in the in-service programs.
11. Involve supporting institutions of higher education in collaborative efforts.
12. Continually assess the overall learning environment.

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